

MATERIAL CULTURE : INTOXICANTS

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on the oil salt and some spices are usually added. The dough is then moulded by hand into cakes of various sizes which are fried in sweet (oil) oil or in clarified butter. *Bars* is usually eaten in this form though occasionally, if curd is available, it is soaked in that until soft.

Dahi is a form of sour milk, though a particular strain of bacteria seems to be required. A bit of old *dahi* is put into the new milk which has been sweetened and to which possibly a little sliced green chili has been added. This is set aside until the *dahi* is formed.

Khir. This is made by boiling rice in milk over a slow fire. Sugar is added to sweeten. When the mixture becomes creamy, chopped coconut, pistachio, and *ilachi* seeds are added to taste.

Batasa. Sugar is boiled with water until there is a very thick syrup. This is poured into a coconut shell which has a small hole in the bottom through which the syrup may drip. This is allowed to drip on cloth or paper forming small balls of various sizes. The product turns out to be a small whitish ball, spongy and very sweet.

FOOD TABOOS. There are certain things which Kols never eat. The use of beef and carrion is universally tabooed. The latter is eaten only by outcastes, and beef is not taken in deference to their Hindu neighbours. It was noted that pork is among the foods used. In Hinduized centres it is no longer eaten as a regular dish, but it is still partaken of at festival times when a young pig may be offered to the goddess and ceremonially eaten. Nothing that creeps on the ground should be eaten.

Among other animals which they never kill nor eat are found the names of the parrot, sparrow, crow, kite and *galgal* (*Acridotheres tristis*).

INTOXICANTS. There is evidence to show that the Kols are not so addicted to the use of intoxicants as they were in previous years. At times of religious ceremonies liquor is still used quite freely and no penalty is attached. In one centre we were informed that the *panchayat* fines any man who is caught drinking liquor, and that they had totally abolished its use in that village. In other places they were not so successful, and yet there was a standard penalty of Rs. 10 or a community feast, when, in the judgment of the *panch* the circumstances warranted it.

Contact with city life seems to increase the use of liquor; and Kol dwellers in Jubbulpore have distinctly less feeling against it and more often indulge in its use than do the people living in the village.

As far as we could learn there was no record of the Kols resorting to the illicit distillation of intoxicants. When they need liquor for their

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[564]

[178]

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[623]

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[443] feasts or religious observances they go to the toddy shops. Here they may secure the following types of intoxicants: From Indian sources liquors from the Mahua tree (*Bassia latifolia*); the toddy palm (*Borassus flabellifer*); the date palm (*Phoenix sylvestris*) and the sago palm (*Caryota urens*). Cheap "foreign" liquors may be bought too, and a bottle of cheap wine may be used at the time of worship; but as a rule they do not resort to these on account of their being relatively more expensive.

301 PERSONAL DECORATION. Kol men do not wear much in the way of decoration. In their case most ornaments are purely amulets. The Thakuriya Kol often wears a bit of gold about its person, usually in the form of an ear-ring.

[304] Kol women are fond of decorations and there are many kinds of cheap jewellery available with which they often bedeck themselves. There is usually found a gold nose decoration fitted into the left side of the nostril which had been pierced when the woman was quite young. The text figure shows one of these, which is said to have cost Rs. 4-3-0. There



Fig. 11

are generally some ear decorations as well. These take various forms and are of both silver and gold or sometimes of cheaper materials. On the arms above the elbow one may find a silver bangle, and below the elbow several silver bangles, between them, however, being yellow and red lac bangles. The lac bracelets are bright and pretty, and they also serve the purpose of keeping the silver bracelets apart, for the rubbing wears down

the silver. Often between the silver and the lac bracelet there is a silver bracelet entirely wrapped with thread or string in order to keep the silver bangle next to it from rubbing against anything.

The head is decorated with hair chains, and sometimes the ear-rings have a string of coins attached to them. Around the neck is often a plain silver ring.

For the legs there are anklets or ankle bracelets. These are

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Rs. 4-8-0 per 1,000 tiles molded and put on the rack to harden. They told us that the average Kol worker would mold about 1,000 tiles per week. [464] [434] [333]

In Panagar there are about 100 families of Kols. Some of them keep chickens and sell the few eggs they get in the local bazaar, or even take them to Jubbulpore on market days. Three or four own bullock carts. The rest of the community divide their time between working on the roads and doing coolie work in the fields when such work is available. This brings them from two to three annas per day. This work is far from steady, being largely seasonal. [443] [493] [422]

In Benda village there are fifteen houses of Kols. Their main work is breaking stone for the metalled roads and preparing limestone for the kilns. They believe that by steady work they can make up to Rs. three per week, but the work is very hard and the hours are long. A few collect *tendu* leaves in season and when other work is slack they go out to the jungles and cut wood. They can earn from three to three and a half annas per day in that way. None of the Benda Kols does any farming.

At Salavara village on the Gaur River, we found that all were engaged in breaking stones for road metal. Their report seemed to indicate that they had to work harder for what they got than some other groups. They said it took them fifteen days to break a *saihora*—a stone measuring approximately 1,000 cubic feet—that two men were required and that they received Rs. 2-8-0 for the *saihora*. Five years ago, they said, they got Rs. 4/- for the same measure. They claim that the work is also harder now as they have to go further for suitable rock.

At Garha close to Jubbulpore, there is a fair-sized Kol community. The village is quite distinct from any other place and about 100 Kol families dwell there. Their occupations are various, and but few have steady work. This group consists mostly of coolies who get work wherever it is available or where the best wages are offered. Sawing wood is a common opening as they do not live far from the timber yards where all the sawing of planks is done by hand. During the wheat harvest they are nearly all away in the fields, leaving their houses empty for the few weeks of the harvesting season. [361] [62]

On a preliminary visit to Rewa State we went to a small Kol community not far from Rewa City. These Kols have considerable land for which they pay rental to a Mahratta landlord. What this group told us has been confirmed by many others, both in and out of Rewa State and seems to characterize the conditions of the Kols there. One informant told us that he was married about twelve years pre [566] [426] [124] [427]

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cut in this forest and carried to Jubbulpore where it is sold to customers among the military folks living on the Ridge. In this way three to four annas per trip are earned. The Kol who takes wood from the reserved forest must pay two pice for each load carried on his head out of the forest.

The cutting of grass during the rainy season is another source of income for this village and a good load of grass, such as may be carried on the head, will bring from three to four annas in Jubbulpore. Gardening would be possible along the banks of the river but they do not do any there. What gardening they do is limited to the manure pile where pumpkins and the like are allowed to grow. There is an occasional hunt with dogs and torches, mainly for hares which stand and watch the light and are either clubbed to death or caught by the dogs. There were no guns in the village, nor did they use the bow and arrow. Although they live right beside the river fishing is not common. Sometimes fish are cornered in shallow water and caught with strips of cloth.

In our visits to Kol villages we also went to numerous bazaars. The bazaar is usually a weekly feature and there is a definite rotation from village to village. In all our inspections we did not find anything for sale in the weekly bazaars which had been brought there by Kols. Any wood, grass, eggs or the like, which they do sell are sold privately to individuals.

Animals. Whenever possible Kols keep animals such as cows, bullocks, goats and chickens, but unless they are rather independent economically not many are found to own cattle. Out of twelve Kol families studied in Barela only four owned cattle: five bullocks, two cows and two calves. Most of the families had a few chickens. Dogs and cats are found in Kol villages but they do not seem to be owned by individuals, belonging rather to the whole village. No swine were kept in Barela, nor by any other Kol community which we studied. Some intimated that in the years that were past swine were kept but that they gave it up so as not to offend their Hindu neighbours. Kols never keep donkeys nor horses. One Kol in Barela wanted to purchase a pair of bullocks, and to do this went to a bazaar in Panagar a distance of twenty miles away, where he got one for eight rupees. A few days later he purchased another from a nearby Gond village and paid twelve rupees. Neither was a very good specimen.

The survey of Kharara Ghat indicated that there they owned 35 bullocks, 73 cows, 43 goats and about 200 chickens. In our investigations we found only one or two Kol families owning buffaloes; their cost and care is far too much for the average Kol. Eight out of the thirty